

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LENDING 01899 060914Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 PA-01 ICA-11 DODE-00 EB-08 OES-07
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FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4499
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, UR, US
SUBJECT: LENINGRAD INDEPENDENCE DAY RECEPTION

REF: 77 LENINGRAD 0796

1. SUMMARY. ON BALANCE, PROTOCOL RANKING OF TOP POLITICAL AND MILITARY PERSONALITIES AT INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION WAS AT ABOUT SAME LEVEL AS LAST YEAR, BUT OVERALL ATTENDANCE LEVEL WAS DOWN AND REMAINED VERY THIN AMONG POLITICAL AND MILITARY VIPS. PRESS COVERAGE WAS MINIMAL. ATMOSPHERE WAS CORRECT IF NOT WARM, WITH MAJOR EXODUS OF GUESTS AT 7:30 SHARP. END SUMMARY.

2. HIGHEST RANKING POLITICAL PERSONAGES PRESENT AT INDEPENDENCE DAY RECEPTION AT RESIDENCE THIS YEAR WERE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN LENINGRAD CITY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, YUIRY A. SHIBAYEV, AND DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF LENINGRAD OBLAST'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, VLADIMIR N. SMIRNOV. THERE WAS NO PARTY OR KOMSOMOL REPRESENTATION AT RECEPTION. SOVIET MILITARY WAS REPRESENTED BY MAJOR GENERAL M. V. PANCHENKO,
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MILITARY COMMANDER OF LENINGRAD, AND COLONEL BASISTOV, CHIEF OF FOREIGN RELATIONS SECTION, POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION OF LENINGRAD MILITARY DISTRICT. WE SAW NO NAVY REPRESENTATIVES AT ALL. POLITICAL REPRESENTATION THUS WAS marginally better than last year and military marginally worse, balancing out at about same level.

3. TURNOUT FROM LENINGRAD'S ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL COMMUNITY STRUCK US AS SIGNIFICANTLY LESS THAN LAST YEAR. TOTAL SOVIET ATTENDANCE WAS LESS THAN EIGHTY MAIN GUESTS, POSSIBLY UP TO 120 PERSONS IN ALL INCLUDING SPOUSES. ATMOSPHERE WAS CORRECT, IF NOT OVERLY WARM, AND THERE WAS NO APPARENT EFFORT TO ENGAGE CONGENOFS IN POLITICAL DIALOGUE OR LEAVE ANY SPECIAL MESSAGE.

4. DESPITE INTERESTING PROGRAM, WHICH INCLUDED SERIES OF SONGS BY WITTENBURG UNIVERSITY CHOIR, WE NOTED THAT MANY OF OUR SOVIET GUESTS WERE CONSULTING THEIR WATCHES PERIODICALLY AND MAJOR EXODUS OF SOVIET GUESTS TOOK PLACE AT 7:30 SHARP (RECEPTION BEGAN AT 6:00 AND WAS OPEN ENDED).

5. PRESS COVERAGE WAS LIMITED TO TWO SENTENCE LENTASS RELEASE CARRIED ONLY IN JULY 4 VERCHERNIY LENINGRAD WHICH NOTED THAT CONSUL GENERAL GAVE INDEPENDENCE DAY RECEPTION AND THAT SHIBAYEV, SMIRNOV, AND YEFIMOV (CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE OF DIPLOMATIC AGENCY IN LENINGRAD) WERE PRESENT. CONTRARY TO LAST YEAR, THERE WAS NO EFFORT CHARACTERIZE ATMOSPHERE.

6. RELATIVELY SPARSE ATTENDANCE WAS FORESHADOWED BY ACYPL DELEGATION RECEPTION AT RESIDENCE JUNE 23 WHICH WAS VIRTUALLY BOYCOTTED BY SOVIET GUESTS, WITH EXCEPTION OF KOMSOMOL HOSTS. OF 15 OTHER CAREFULLY SELECTED GUESTS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ONLY DEPUTY DIRECTOR LENINGRAD CULTURAL DIRECTORATE AND DEPUTY HEAD, STATE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY SHOWED UP, BOTH ASKING NERVOUSLY WHERE OTHER SOVIET GUESTS WERE.

7. COMMENT: MODEST ATTENDANCE, TIMED DEPARTURE, CORRECT BUT RELATIVELY COOL ATMOSPHERE AND CURSORY PRESS COVERAGE WERE NO DOUBT SOVIET WAY OF CONVEYING TO US IMPRESSION OF COOLER RELATIONSHIP. BUCHANAN

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
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Litigation History:
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